

Remarks

Claims 1-18 are at issue. Claims 4, 7, 9, 10, 17 & 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 112 second paragraph. Claim 12 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claims 1-7, 14, 16 & 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Nyseth. Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being unpatentable over A.L. Schreiber. Claims 8-11, 13 & 15 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unptentable over Nyseth in view of Kwok. Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nyseth, in view of Kwok and further in view of A. L. Schreiber.

With respect to figure 1, an arrowhead has been inserted.

With respect to figure 2, the dashed lines have been extended. Some of the reference numerals have been removed.

a notch not S-shape
With respect to the "exterior partial S-shaped cutout", reference numeral 53 points to the cutout. The item can be clearly seen in figures 2 & 3. The item is discussed on page 4, lines 12-13 of the specification. The objection should be withdrawn.

With respect to the retention springs, reference numerals 38 & 38'. These items are discussed at page 3, lines 20-21. Note that while the retention springs are not the standard metal coil springs, they are made of "a rubber substance that is deformable". Within any reasonable definition of the word spring, items 38 & 38' are springs. The objection should be withdrawn.

Claims 4 & 18 as amended make it clear that the base to tip distance is the distance D 53 of the first substantially U-shaped plate. The patent is directed to a semiconductor cassette reducer. These cassettes are called front opening unified pods. Since the patent is inherently directed to the front opening unified pods and the feature being claimed is relative to the front opening unified pod, it only makes sense that the applicant be allowed to have claims that relate to the front opening unified pod or the semiconductor wafer that fits in the pod. This feature is discussed at page 4, lines 8-10. The rejection of claims 4 & 18 should be withdrawn.

With respect to claim 9, the specification is very clear that "the columns 26, 28 have a first position 56 and a second position 58. The first position allows the wafers to be coaxially aligned with the position of the larger wafers in the FOUP and the second position aligns the front edge of the wafer with the front edge of the FOUP". See page 4, lines 17-21. The rejection of claim 9 must be withdrawn.

With respect to claim 10, the first and second arm cutouts are reference numeral 42. These are clearly pointed out in the specification and the drawings. The rejection of claim 10 is improper.

With respect to claim 17, the Examiner suggests that the same pair of arms have already been recited in claim 14. However, a closer reading of claim 17 shows that the addition feature of "an interior cutout" in the arms is present in claim 17 but not in claim 14.

Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 USC 112 second paragraph, however the applicant is unable to ascertain what the objection to claim 7 is.

Claim 1 requires "two or more retention springs". The Examiner points to item 164 and 166 of Nyseth. The applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner. The description in Nyseth makes it clear that elements 164 & 166 are part of the "second molded portion". In addition, they are called "side rejections". See Col. 4, lines 50-57 of Nyseth. These are clearly not retention springs. The claim also requires that the wafer supports connect the two U-shaped plates. The wafer supports (27) of Nyseth do touch the U-shaped plates but they clearly do not connect the two U-shaped plates. See figure 2, elements 231 of Nyseth. Claim 1 is allowable over the prior art.

✓ Claim 2 requires a pair of interior arm cutouts, element 42 of the present application. These are clearly not shown in Nyseth. Claim 2 is allowable over the prior art.

✓ Claim 3 requires a base cutout, element 44 of the present application. This is clearly not shown in Nyseth. Claim 3 is allowable over the prior art.

✓ Claim 4 requires the cassette reducer fit inside the FOUP. This is clearly not shown in Nyseth. Claim 4 is allowable over the prior art.

Claim 5 requires the wafer supports be panels that connect the two U-shaped plates. The wafer supports (27, FIG. 12) of Nyseth do touch the U-shaped plates but they clearly do not connect the two U-shaped plates. See figure 2, elements 231 of Nyseth. Claim 5 is allowable over the prior art.

✓ Claim 6 is allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

Claim 7 requires an exterior partial S-shaped cutout, element 53 of the present application. As the specification makes clear, these S-shaped cutouts are necessary for the cassette reducer to fit inside the FOUP. This is clearly not shown in Nyseth. Claim 7 is allowable over the prior art.

Claim 8 is allowable as being dependent from an allowable base claim.

Claim 9 requires that the columns have two positions. This is clearly not shown in Nyseth and Kwok.

Claim 10 requires a plurality of wafer supports that connect the first and second plate. The Examiner point to A. L. Schreiber. However, if the

Examiner makes the analogy that setter 1 is the same as one of the U-shaped plates, then there are no wafer supports in Schreiber. The "setters 1 may be stacked one upon the other". See Page 2, Col. 1, lines 13-15. Claim 10 is allowable over the prior art.

Claim 11 requires a plurality of retention springs. The description in Nyseth makes it clear that elements 164, 166 are part of the "second molded portion". In addition, they are called "side rejections". See Col. 4, lines 50-57 of Nyseth. These are clearly not retention springs.

Claim 13 is allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

Claim 14 requires that wafer supports be attached to the U-shaped plate. The wafer supports (27) of Nyseth do touch the U-shaped plates but they clearly do not attach the two U-shaped plates. See figure 2, elements 231 of Nyseth. Claim 14 is allowable over the prior art.

Claim 15 is allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

Claim 16 requires a plurality of flexible disks, element 38. The prior art does not show any flexible disks. Claim 16 is allowable over the prior art.

Claim 17 is allowable as being dependent from an allowable base claim.

Claim 18 requires the cassette reducer fit inside the FOUP. This is clearly not shown in Nyseth. Claim 18 is allowable over the prior art.

In the Claims(marked up version)

4(Amended). The semiconductor cassette reducer of claim 1, wherein a base to tip distance of the first substantially U-shaped plate is less than an interior depth of a front opening unified pod.

18(Amended). The semiconductor cassette reducer of claim 14, wherein a base to tip distance of the first substantially U-shaped plate is less than a diameter of wafer' designed for a front opening unified pod.

Prompt reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested

Respectfully submitted,

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Signature (Dale B. Halling)